

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In summary, claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102, and claims 9 and 17 are objected to. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Claims 21-42 are newly added. No new matter is added. Claims 21-40 contain the elements of claims 1-20, respectively, wherein independent claim 21 further recites "said tail end portions of said second terminal contacts are directly electrically connected to certain of said tail end portions of said first terminal contacts" and independent claim 33 further recites "said first terminal contacts being directly electrically connected to certain of said second terminal contacts" (Emphasis added to show inserted terms). Newly added independent claim 41 contains the elements of claims 1, 8, and 9, and newly added independent claim 42 contains the elements of claims 13, 16, and 17.

Claims Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,394,853, issued to Hammond et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Hammond et al.").

Hammond et al. neither discloses nor suggests "certain of said tail end portions of said second terminal contacts are electrically connected to certain of said tail end portions of said first terminal contacts" as recited in independent claim 1 and "certain of said first terminal contacts being electrically connected to certain of said second terminal contacts" as recited in independent claim 13.

Hammond et al. teaches a data connector that "automatically changes the configuration of contacts 35 based upon the configuration of a mating connector plug inserted therein." (Column 7, line 66 to Column 8, line 1) In contrast to teaching first terminal contacts electrically connected to second terminal contacts, Hammond et al. teaches a data connector having signal contacts connected to an external multiconductor cable. "The data connector...securably receives at least two distinct types of mating connector plugs having different contact arrangements....The data connector further includes...a plurality of signal

contacts...which are used to frictionally engage mating contacts in the plugs...In order to change the configuration of the signal contacts to accommodate different mating connectors, the...data connector includes a slidable switch device...for electrically connecting the signal contacts to the conductors of the multiconductor cable...". (Abstract) [Emphasis Added] This configuration is described in more detail in column 5, lines 1-9 of Hammond et al.

"Referring further to FIGS. 1 and 2, a printed circuit board (PCB) 30 is positioned within housing 10 that includes a support surface 32 from which a plurality of signal contacts 35 longitudinally depend. Contacts 35 are electrically coupled to PCB 30 and are desirably arranged adjacent to one another in vertically spaced rows as shown so that each signal contact of a mating connector plug will have a corresponding signal contact 35 in electrical communication therewith." [Emphasis Added]

In the Office Action, it is stated that the tail end portions of both the first terminal contacts and second terminals are electrically connected by means of the jumper connector (60). The jumper connector (60) taught in Hammond et al. does not electrically connect the first terminal contacts and the second terminals. Rather, Hammond et al. teaches that the jumper connector (60) connects the first and second terminals to the plug upon insertion of the plug. "In order to change the configuration of the signal contacts to accommodate different mating connector plugs, the present invention data connector further includes a jumper connector coupled to the PCB....The jumper connector cooperates with a slidable switch device along a top surface of the PCB for selectively electrically connecting the signal contacts to the conductors of the multiconductor cable via the PCB logic." [Emphasis Added] (Column 3, lines 33-44)

Hammond et al. further teaches that the jumper connector (60) includes a jumper board (70) that electrically connects selected signal contacts (35) to conductors of the plug dependent upon to the type of plug inserted. However, at no time does the jumper connector (60) electrically connect the contacts (35). In fact, Hammond et al. teaches that the jumper connector creates an open circuit for signal contacts that are not electrically connected to a plug, and that the shorting of contacts is undesirable. "Jumper board 70, via vertical reciprocating motion relative to jumper connector 60, reconfigures signal contacts 35 so as to

leave those signal contacts associated with a first mating connector plug as open circuits and simultaneously connect those signal contacts associated with a second, distinct mating connector plug accordingly to reconfigure data connector 5 for the second plug. In each of the first and second positions, unused contacts are "left open" by the PCB logic, thereby preventing the undesirable shorting of electrical connections and associated problems with data transfer." [Emphasis Added] (Column 7, lines 56-66) Thus, Hammond et al. does not teach that the second terminal contacts are electrically connected to the first terminal contacts as suggested in the Office Action.

Claims 2-8 and 10-12 depend upon claim 1, and claims 14-16 and 18-20 depend upon claims 13, and therefore claims 2-8, 10-12, 14-16, and 18-20 are not anticipated by Hammond et al. for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1 and 13.

Because Hammond et al. neither discloses nor suggests "certain of said tail end portions of said second terminal contacts are electrically connected to certain of said tail end portions of said first terminal contacts", it is requested that the rejection of claims 1-8, 10-16, and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge that claims 9 and 17 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the above presented remarks, it is requested that the objections to claims 9 and 17 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Please note that newly added independent claim 41 includes the limitations of claims 1, 8, and 9 and newly added independent claim 42 includes the limitations of claims 13, 16, and 17.


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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow this application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss resolution of any remaining issues.

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